

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



2005 I participated in the World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany. I travelled from NJ with a group of 100 youth to the meeting with Pope Benedict XVI. Our pilgrimage began in Poland, where we visited and prayed at churches in Cracow, Wadowice, (birth place of Pope St. John Paul II), we also visited Auschwitz, and then Prague before arriving in Germany.

One of the highlights for the youth was the Cathedral in Cologne. There we knelt before and prayed at the tomb of the Three Kings, the Magi, who are buried there.

Their shrine is a large gilded and decorated triple sarcophagus placed above and behind the high altar of the Cathedral. It is considered the high point of Mosan art and the largest reliquary in the western world.

Brought to Constantinople in the 4th Century by St. Helena, the relics of the Three Kings were originally venerated at the Shrine of St. Sophia in Constantinople. In the late 6th century the relics were moved to Milan, and then in 1164 they were transferred to Cologne, where the large gothic Cathedral was built to house them.

Balthasar, Melchior and Caspar came from the Far East to adore the Christ child in Bethlehem. They were present at his birth 2018 years ago. They continue to be present in our lives today through their witness, example, and intercession.

The east, the Orient! We, as Christians, are called by our Baptism to be ‘Oriented’. That is, to have a sense of direction and purpose in life. Not to do so is to be disoriented – to bumble thru life without any fixed goal.

We are pilgrims walking towards the encounter with Christ. Each day, our journey either leads towards, or away from him.

This journey is only possible if one follows the Star. This Star is faith, the light which shines in darkness. This light is present in our lives, it beckons to follow its path.

The Magi experienced the Epiphany, that is, the manifestation, or the revelation of Christ. This same Epiphany awaits us in the Liturgy we celebrate today!

Fr. Sean